

**Volunteer and Donations Management
Support Annex
Colorado State Emergency Operations Plan**

COORDINATING AGENCY: Colorado Division of Emergency Management (DEM)

COOPERATING AGENCIES: Adventist Community Services (ACS); American Red Cross (ARC); Citizens Corps; Colorado 2-1-1 Collaborative; Colorado Volunteer Center Network (CVCN); Colorado Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (COVOAD); Goodwill Industries; Governor's Commission on Community Service; The Salvation Army.

I. Purpose

The Volunteer and Donations Management Support Annex describes the coordinating processes used to ensure the most efficient and effective utilization of unaffiliated volunteers and unsolicited donated goods during major emergencies and disasters. To accomplish this purpose, this annex establishes two teams to coordinate the efforts of state, local federal, voluntary and non-profit organizations:

- A. **Volunteer Coordination Team**, to manage the use of spontaneous and unaffiliated volunteers during response and recovery activities and to ensure that efforts coordinated with voluntary organizations involved in relief efforts.
- B. **Donations Management Team**, to receive, stage, process, distribute and dispose of unsolicited, undesignated donated goods from the general public.

II. Scope

This annex provides guidance on the State role in volunteer and donations management. Any reference to volunteer services and donated goods refers to unsolicited, undesignated goods and unaffiliated volunteers. The management system described in this annex applies only to those offers of assistance that are not already being managed by COVOAD or other non-profit organizations with established volunteer and/or donations management programs. This annex is to be implemented when local government measures are overwhelmed and upon request of the effected local jurisdiction

- A. **Volunteer Coordination** involves a process for matching volunteers with established voluntary organizations and procedures for effectively channeling offers of assistance from unaffiliated citizens to meet disaster-related needs. The State encourages individuals to affiliate with a local VOAD or other recognized organization to facilitate their involvement in

relief activities. When implemented, this volunteer coordination system will be supplemental to, and not duplicative of, established volunteer coordination systems in local volunteer centers, VOADs, Citizen Corps Councils, or other existing programs.

- B. **Donations Management** involves coordinating a system that receives and distributes unsolicited, undesignated donated goods, matching them with victims who demonstrate a need. The State looks principally to those private voluntary organizations with established donations systems already in place to receive and deliver appropriate donated goods to disaster victims. The State encourages the donation of cash to these organizations rather than clothing, food or other goods. Donations management activities include: providing guidance to citizens, managing a telephone registration and database system, establishing one or more collection facilities, creating a system to sort and distribute donated items, and storing donated resources until they are needed.

III. **Situation**

The management of unaffiliated volunteers and unsolicited donations requires a cooperative effort by governmental and tribal agencies, volunteer and community-based organizations, faith-based groups, businesses and the media. The State and its local government and voluntary agency partners are responsible for developing plans for managing volunteers and donations during incident management operations.

During emergencies, unplanned deliveries of donated goods services to a disaster site can jam distribution channels, overwhelm government and voluntary agencies, and interfere with response and recovery activities. The need to unload and sort goods into more manageable and deliverable units can compete with the personnel and resource demands of other emergency response activities. Likewise, offers of assistance from unaffiliated volunteers often are underutilized and even problematic for established response agencies, despite the good intentions of citizens that emerge to help their neighbors.

Careful donations management planning and preplanned volunteer management strategies will reduce problems associated with unsolicited donations and spontaneous, unaffiliated volunteer response.

IV. **Planning Assumptions**

The State will coordinate the provisions of this annex cooperatively with COVOAD, volunteer centers and other voluntary agencies. Because private relief and community-based organizations are experienced in managing volunteers and donations, the State will rely on these organizations for their resources and expertise and support their efforts to minimize and best utilize unaffiliated

volunteers and undesignated donations. This annex does not supersede the plans, policies and procedures of voluntary organizations nor does it effect donations or volunteer assistance offered directly to voluntary agency partners.

Public offers of assistance may be in the form of money, food, clothing, products, equipment, in-kind services, or volunteered time. The State will advocate cash as the best, first alternative for donors to optimize the usefulness of their assistance. Where appropriate, the State will encourage donors to donate goods and volunteered time to and through VOAD member agencies and other local voluntary organizations that have established systems for utilizing volunteers and receiving, processing, and distributing donated goods.

Local volunteer centers in the Colorado Volunteer Center Network maintain a list of sites where volunteers are needed and by what agency. Volunteer centers are an important asset and can handle registration of unaffiliated volunteers and match their various skills with identified needs.

Public service announcements through media and internet sources will inform, advise and direct citizens regarding the cooperative strategy, including the message encouraging the designation of donations and volunteer affiliation. The State will inform the public of appropriate ways to help, highlight unneeded goods and services, and assist donors in understanding the missions of the various voluntary organizations to facilitate the designation of donations and affiliation of volunteers.

V. Concept of Operations

This Annex will be implemented in response to major emergencies or disasters that overwhelm local capabilities to manage unsolicited donations and unaffiliated volunteers. Upon request of the effected local jurisdiction(s), the Director of the Colorado Division of Emergency Management (DEM), in consultation with the Colorado Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (COVOAD), will determine the need to activate this Annex. The Director will notify the Cooperating Agencies identified in this Annex prior to a public announcement regarding activation of any of the plan's components, including phone numbers for public donations. A FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL) may be detailed to the State EOC to provide technical assistance following a Presidential Disaster Declaration.

Upon activation of this Annex, the DEM Director will designate DEM staff members to serve as Volunteer Coordination Team Coordinator and Donations Management Team Coordinator. Team Coordinators are responsible for supervising the overall State effort, coordinating with appropriate agencies to determine available resources and needs, and maintaining communication with local emergency management officials. In the State EOC organization, the

Teams will be activated as Units in the Logistics Branch. In smaller-scale events, a single team to coordinate both volunteers and donations will be formed. The operations guidelines for the two teams are outlined below.

A. Volunteer Coordination Team Operations

1. The Volunteer Coordination Team is tasked with matching spontaneous, unaffiliated volunteers with established voluntary organizations or, when individuals prefer not to affiliate, with discrete tasks to meet identified disaster-related needs.
2. A volunteer processing center will be established by the State or through the Colorado Volunteer Center Network (CVCN) in order to efficiently process and register unaffiliated volunteers and to match their skills to agencies needing assistance. The volunteer processing center provides an effective way to document volunteer registration, requests for volunteers, volunteer service hours, staffing costs, and expenses incurred.
3. Individuals interested in volunteering services will be encouraged to affiliate with recognized voluntary organizations. Unaffiliated volunteers will be discouraged from going directly to any disaster site.
4. Local emergency managers will be contacted and asked to identify requirements for volunteers with specific technical skills. Voluntary agencies should communicate their need for volunteers to local emergency managers.
5. Each voluntary agency will be responsible for feeding and, when necessary, housing volunteers affiliated with their organization or under their direction. Documentation of volunteer hours and the types of work involved should be maintained in the event that liability issues or questions about worker's compensation arise. In federally-declared disasters, certain types of volunteer labor may be included among eligible expenses counting toward the local match requirement, so volunteer hours should be carefully documented.
6. Requests for unaffiliated volunteer assistance shall be made through the local EOC to either the State EOC or the Colorado Volunteer Center Network.

B. Donations Management Team Operations

1. The Donations Management Team is tasked with facilitating the matching of donated goods and services with all organizations involved.
2. State public information staff will issue timely news releases to the media to encourage the public to contribute cash donations to established, recognized disaster relief organizations. All inquiries

concerning donations to a specified organization will be referred to that organization. Donors offering cash for unspecified organizations or programs will be directed to the COVOAD web page. Cash donations are not accepted by DEM or the State EOC.

3. Utilizing news media releases, donors will be discouraged from sending unsolicited or undesignated in-kind donations directly to the disaster site. Donors who attempt to donate unsolicited or inappropriate goods, such as clothing, will be directed to community-based agencies such as food banks, thrift stores, and voluntary organizations that have a need for the donated goods.
4. Cash donations will be advocated, but when donated goods are requested, donors may be advised that only pre-sorted, clearly labeled, palletized, and shrink-wrapped donations with a predetermined transportation method – and that have been identified as needed – will be accepted.
5. A central phone number may be established to respond to inquiries concerning donations. The number of operators utilized will be determined based on the circumstances of each disaster event and the volume of calls received or projected. Whenever feasible, Colorado 2-1-1 Collaborative will be requested to operate a donations hotline. Otherwise, the hotline will be established at the State EOC.
6. A computer database will be needed for documenting donated resources and donations information should be shared with all participating agencies. For recovery operations where Colorado 2-1-1 Collaborative is responsible for managing the phone hotline, database management will also be the responsibility of Colorado 2-1-1 Collaborative. Otherwise, the database will be managed from the State EOC.
7. The State will make every effort to match offers of donated goods and services with established agencies or identified needs, thereby eliminating the need to establish staging areas or warehouses. When warehouse operations are necessary, Adventist Community Services Disaster Relief will be tasked with managing warehouse operations, including receiving, sorting, storage, distribution and disposition of donated goods.
8. The transportation of goods from donors to receiving organizations is the responsibility of the donor. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis, but only for the most desperately needed items. The transportation of goods from the warehouse to distribution points may be by any appropriate means – receiving organization pick up, private haulers donating their services, local and state government resources, or by other means arranged by the Donations Management Team. Voluntary organizations are generally responsible for transporting supplies in their custody.

9. Unsolicited, undesignated donations that are unsuitable for use by any organization involved in relief efforts will not be accepted. The State will identify and publicize items that are not needed and will not be accepted, including used mattresses and pharmaceuticals/medical supplies from the general public. The State will coordinate the disposition of unused and unneeded donations following relief efforts.
10. The State and local EOCs will cooperatively manage information about donations management issues. Where there is a specific need for donated goods outside of the established non-profit programs (e.g., water), the Donations Management Team will coordinate solicited, undesignated donations.
11. The State will coordinate public information with supporting agencies and issue timely news media releases through the Joint Information Center (JIC).
12. Any time that this Annex is activated, close coordination with the Joint Information Center (JIC) is essential to ensure donation needs, information on the availability of donated goods, and pertinent information on the donations and volunteer management program is provided to the media for dissemination to the public.
13. During demobilization of the donations and volunteer management system for a specific disaster event, the State may facilitate the formation of a Long-Term Recovery Committee (LTRC) to continue to address the needs of disaster victims that could not be met by governmental assistance and immediately available emergency assistance from voluntary agencies. LTRC assistance targets those who have unmet needs after assistance from all other sources has been provided. An LTRC may be needed because disaster victims often will continue to have significant unmet needs after personal resources, insurance and immediate disaster-related government benefits are exhausted.
14. LTRC efforts are intended to complement, but not duplicate, assistance provided by FEMA, voluntary agencies, churches, civic groups and citizens. LTRCs will help evacuees understand their available benefits, assist them if necessary in making application, and make referrals to relevant agencies. State and federal government agencies support the LTRC by helping to identify and coordinate available recovery resources, but leadership and management of the coalition are assumed by representatives of the faith-based, non-profit and voluntary organizations that comprise its membership.

VI. Responsibilities

A. Coordinating Agency

1. Colorado Division of Emergency Management
 - a. Coordinate overall efforts to manage spontaneous, unaffiliated volunteers and unsolicited, undesignated donations upon request of effected local jurisdictions during major emergencies and disasters that overwhelm local capabilities
 - b. Appoint a staff member to serve as Coordinator for the Volunteer Coordination Team. The Team will:
 - (1) Assess the situation, determine staffing needs appropriate to the emergency situation, and assemble team members to handle volunteer coordination issues
 - (2) Coordinate with appropriate agencies to determine appropriate resources and needs, including local emergency management offices
 - (3) Assist voluntary organizations in obtaining needed services
 - (4) Establish a volunteer processing center to process and register unaffiliated volunteers and to match their skills to agencies needing assistance or, where available, delegate this responsibility to a local volunteer center
 - (5) Provide coordination through the JIC to notify the contributing public of volunteer skills that are needed.
 - c. Appoint a staff member to serve as Coordinator for the Donations Management Team. The Team will:
 - (1) Assess the situation, determine staffing needs appropriate to the emergency situation, and assemble team members to handle donations management issues
 - (2) Coordinate with appropriate agencies to determine appropriate resources and needs, including local emergency management offices
 - (3) Assist voluntary organizations in obtaining needed goods and services
 - (4) Establish a public donations hotline and database management system or, where available, delegate this responsibility to an established agency with relevant expertise, such as United Way 211
 - (5) In coordination with Adventist Community Services, locate, lease and establish a donations warehouse when necessary to receive, stage and distribute unsolicited, undesignated donations
 - (6) Provide coordination through the JIC to notify the contributing public of volunteer skills that are needed

- (7) Assist in developing procedures for the disposal of unsolicited, unsuitable, unneeded or excess donated materials.
- (8) Review and approve of contracts necessary to carry out volunteer coordination and donations management responsibilities identified in this Annex.
- (9) Maintain this Annex and assist cooperating agencies with development of implementing instructions such as SOPs and checklists.

B. Cooperating Agencies

- 1. Adventist Community Services
 - a. Provide management and volunteers for a donations management warehouse when requested by the State to provide distribution of food, clothing, water, and other needed items, in accordance with the DEM-ACS MOU.
 - b. Assist in developing procedures for managing unsolicited, undesignated donations received through the donations hotline.
- 2. American Red Cross (ARC)
Provide a liaison to the Volunteer Coordination and Donations Management Teams and coordinate ARC assistance with state and local agencies and voluntary organizations involved in relief efforts.
- 3. Citizen Corps
Provide a liaison to the Volunteer Coordination Team and coordinate Citizen Corps Council programs and assistance with State and local agencies and voluntary organizations involved in relief efforts.
- 4. Colorado 2-1-1- Collaborative
In accordance with the MOU with DEM, establish a central phone number to respond to inquiries concerning donations and a computer database for documenting donated resources and donations information should be shared with all participating agencies. For recovery operations where Colorado 2-1-1 Collaborative is responsible for managing the phone hotline, database management will also be the responsibility of Colorado 2-1-1 Collaborative.
- 5. Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)
 - a. Provide a liaison to the Volunteer Coordination Team and coordinate medical and public health volunteer efforts with

- local agencies and voluntary organizations involved in relief efforts.
 - b. In cooperation with effected local jurisdictions, coordinate activities of medical and public health volunteers. Volunteers with these specialized skills will be activated, assigned, credentialed and tracked through the Colorado Public Health and Medical Volunteer System (CPHMVS)
- 6. Colorado Volunteer Center Network (CVCN)
Upon request by the State and in accordance with the DEM-CVCN MOU, establish a system to efficiently process and register unaffiliated volunteers and to match their skills to agencies needing assistance. The volunteer processing center provides an effective way to document volunteer registration, requests for volunteers, volunteer service hours, staffing costs, and expenses incurred.
- 7. Colorado Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (COVOAD)
 - a. Notify COVOAD member agencies when activated under this Annex.
 - b. Provide a liaison to the Volunteer Coordination and Donations Management Teams.
 - c. Provide overall coordination necessary to expeditiously access the resources of COVOAD member agencies.
- 8. The Salvation Army
Provide a liaison to the Volunteer Coordination and Donations Management Teams and coordinate assistance from The Salvation Army with state and local agencies and voluntary organizations involved in relief efforts.

VII. Financial Management

Cooperating Agencies are responsible for managing financial matters related to resources under their control or procured for purposes related to specific recovery efforts. Cooperating Agencies are responsible for recording and tracking their own costs and expenditures and seeking reimbursement from appropriate sources after an event. Following a Presidential Disaster Declaration, reimbursement of eligible expenditures may be provided by FEMA in accordance with Stafford Act program guidelines. The State of Colorado is not responsible for the disaster-related costs of Cooperating Agencies, except as defined in formal Memorandums of Understanding.

Cooperating Agencies that receive donated resources should document donor names and addresses, specific items donated, how they were used and for what purpose, and final disposition of the donations. Organizations accepting

donations of cash and/or goods will follow applicable internal audit policies and procedures.